



# Edgemcombe County Department of Social Services

March 2008

Diane Johnson -Editor

## A Message from our Director



March is a special month for me. It marks my **one** year tenure as Edgemcombe County DSS Director. Edgemcombe County is a wonderful place to work and live. It has been a pleasure getting to know each of you and interacting with you on a day to day basis. The year went by fast and was rewarding and held many challenges. I vowed to serve the agency and citizens of this fine County with respect, dignity, and integrity. As I have stated before, I sincerely appreciate all you do in serving our citizens. Your **hard work and dedication** has not gone unnoticed. As we prepare for the Social Worker's Banquet on March 31, 2008, and for unveiling the name of the Social Worker of the year, remember the person who will hold this distinguished title exemplifies dedication, compassion, honesty, motivation and team player. Only one person will wear the crown, but all of our Social Workers have these extraordinary traits and are eligible for this prestigious honor.

*Mary M. Scott*

### March Service Anniversaries

### March Birthdays

Employee	Unit	Yrs	Day	Employee	Unit/Area
Carolyn Johnson	Adult Services – Tarboro	14	Mar 1	Mary Draughn	Food & Nutrition – Rocky Mount
Debbie Pippen	Food & Nutrition – Tarboro	9	1	Samantha Knight	Food & Nutrition – Rocky Mount
Kimberly Boddie	Medicaid – Tarboro	8	4	Janice Taylor	Fiscal – Tarboro
Shirley Cotton	Food & Nutrition – Tarboro	8	7	Peggy Lyons	Food & Nutrition – Tarboro
Kristie Howell	Medicaid – Rocky Mount	8	8	Susan Bolton	Medicaid – Tarboro
Kimberly Pearce	Children Services – Tarboro	8	11	Georgia Kamp	Children Services – Tarboro
Annetta Pitt	Adult Services – Tarboro	8	16	Shawn Sylvester	Adult Services – Tarboro
Katherine Randolph	Work First – Rocky Mount	8	17	Patricia Drewery	Fiscal – Tarboro
Janice Taylor	Fiscal – Tarboro	7	17	Trina Ebron	Children Services – Tarboro
Ruby Hill	Fiscal – Rocky Mount	6	18	Katherine Randolph	Work First – Rocky Mount
Quay Canady	Work First – Tarboro	4	29	Clifton Hickman	Director's Unit - Tarboro
Kimberly Dozier	Work First – Tarboro	4			
Kiersten Talbot	Work First – Rocky Mount	4			
Lakesia Everette	Adult Services – Tarboro	2			
Valerie Fenister	Work First – Rocky Mount	2			
Avril Lyons	Medicaid – Rocky Mount	2			
Nanette Casper	Children Services – Tarboro	1			
Marva Scott	Director - Tarboro	1			

### Congratulations to our new Employees

Sharon Revis, Medicaid Unit - Rocky Mount.

Ella Lane, Food & Nutrition Unit - Tarboro

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## Who They Are & What They Do

### Work First

The Mission of the Edgecombe County Department of Social Services is to form partnerships with families and communities to enhance the family's quality of life. Being family focused and community driven, the Edgecombe County Department of Social Services believes that the family unit is the primary and preferred resource for meeting the needs of children and adults, as well as provide for the total needs of families, delivering services within a structure environment that promotes personal and family independence and safety. To this end, the Edgecombe County Department of Social Services Work First Program has been awarded a \$10,000 grant from CJH Educational Grant Services. This local Demonstration Grant Project entitled Healthy Marriage MATTERS will develop a unique opportunity with youth and teens in our Work First and Child Welfare Program areas, tailoring marriage activities for teens through education, research, and services.

Teenagers today face a multitude of challenges and make important social and health decisions that have serious consequences for their lives, their future health, and their families. Implementation of the Healthy Marriage MATTERS initiative will focus on increasing youth knowledge about the benefits of marriage using culturally sensitive programs and strategies. Collaborating with other community partners the Work First and Child Welfare Programs will conduct workshops, classes, and seminars that will include guest speakers for teens and adults. These activities will focus on family instability, generational poverty, children, one's own morals and values, sexual activity and domestic violence. Planned parent-child activities, field trips and recreational activities will be arranged targeting the attitude of teens, and adolescents toward sexual activity, pregnancy, and sexually transmitted diseases, aimed at promoting the institution of marriage.

In the area of marketing and promotion, this grant initiative will work to market this Healthy Marriage MATTERS Project. Community partner and others will be identified as sources to provided marketing and promotional ideas, making Healthy Marriage Matters visible among their targeted region, ensuring distribution of the message beyond Edgecombe County and available throughout the surrounding counties. The dissemination of information concerning this project will also be printed in the Agency's monthly newsletter as well as to various other organizations. In addition; there will be ongoing community-wide marketing. This campaign will take several forms.

- media, electronic and print
- events
- participation in community-wide fairs, symposia, celebrations
- billboards and other advertising

Work First in Edgecombe County is working building success one family at a time, encouraging self-sufficiency, responsibility, independence, and employment. Work First remains committed to new ideas that will contribute to the way our communities evolve.

### Children Protective Services

The Emergency Foster Care program serves as a residential placement for children who are not successful in their own home. The program provides foster care to children on an emergency 24-hour basis. The program serves court-involved adolescents between the ages of 10-17 who are referred to the program by Juvenile Court Counselors or a Department of Social Services Social Worker. The average length of stay is 60 to 90 days. Referrals are made to community agencies and resources. The social worker assists families in keeping appointments, tracks progress, school attendance and other identified issues. Services are put in place in order to prevent further penetration in the juvenile justice system. A referral can be made to the Children Service's Unit Support Team I.

This is a test given by the Human Relations Dept. at many of the major corporations today. It helps them get better insight concerning their employees and prospective employees. It's only 10 Simple Questions, so grab a pencil and paper, keeping track of your letter to each question.

**1. When do you feel your best?**

- A) in the morning
- B) during the afternoon and early evening
- C) late at night

**2. You usually walk...**

- A) fairly fast, with long steps
- B) fairly fast, with little steps
- C) less fast head up, looking the world in the face
- D) less fast, head down
- E) very slowly

**3. When talking to people you. ..**

- A) stand with your arms folded
- B) have your hands clasped
- C) have one or both your hands on your hips
- D) touch or push the person to whom you are talking
- E) play with your ear, touch your chin, or smooth your hair

**4. When relaxing, you sit with. ..**

- A) your knees bent with your legs neatly side by side
- B) your legs crossed
- C) your legs stretched out or straight
- D) one leg curled under you

**5. When something really amuses you, you react with...**

- A) big appreciated laugh
- B) a laugh, but not a loud one
- C) a quiet chuckle
- D) a sheepish smile

**6. When you go to a party or social gathering you...**

- A) make a loud entrance so everyone notices you
- B) make a quiet entrance, looking around for someone you know
- C) make the quietest entrance, trying to stay unnoticed

**7. You're working very hard, concentrating hard, and you're interrupted...**

- A) welcome the break
- B) feel extremely irritated
- C) vary between these two extremes

**8. Which of the following colors do you like most?**

- A) Red or orange
- B) black
- C) yellow or light blue
- D) green
- E) dark blue or purple
- F) white
- G) brown or gray

**9. When you are in bed at night, in those last few moments before going to sleep you are...**

- A) stretched out on your back
- B) stretched out face down on your stomach
- C) on your side, slightly curled
- D) with your head on one arm
- E) with your head under the covers

**10. You often dream that you are...**

- A) falling
- B) fighting or struggling
- C) searching for something or somebody
- D) flying or floating
- E) you usually have dreamless sleep
- F) your dreams are always pleasant

**POINTS:**

- 1. (a) 2 (b) 4 (c) 6
- 2. (a) 6 (b) 4 (c) 7 (d) 2 (e) 1
- 3. (a) 4 (b) 2 (c) 5 (d) 7 (e) 6
- 4. (a) 4 (b) 6 (c) 2 (d) 1
- 5. (a) 6 (b) 4 (c) 3 (d) 5 (e) 2
- 6. (a) 6 (b) 4 (c) 2
- 7. (a) 6 (b) 2 (c) 4
- 8. (a) 6 (b) 7 (c) 5 (d) 4 (e) 3 (f) 2 (g) 1
- 9. (a) 7 (b) 6 (c) 4 (d) 2 (e) 1
- 10 (a) 4 (b) 2 (c) 3 (d) 5 (e) 6 (f) 1

**Now add up the total number of points.**

**OVER 60 POINTS:** Others see you as someone they should "handle with care." You're seen as vain, self-centered, and who is extremely dominant. Others may admire you, wishing they could be more like you, but don't always trust you, hesitating to become too deeply involved with you.

**51 to 60 POINTS:** Others see you as an exciting, highly volatile, rather impulsive personality; a natural leader, who's quick to make decisions, though not always the right ones. They see you as bold and adventuresome, someone who will try anything once; someone who takes chances and enjoys an adventure. They enjoy being in your company because of the excitement you radiate.

**41 to 50 POINTS:** Others see you as fresh, lively, charming, amusing, practical, and always interesting; someone who's constantly in the center of attention, but sufficiently well balanced not to let it go to their head. They also see you as kind, considerate, and understanding; someone who'll always cheer them up and help them out.

**31 to 40 POINTS:** Others see you as sensible, cautious, careful & practical. They see you as clever, gifted, or talented, but modest. Not a person who makes friends too quickly or easily, but someone who's extremely loyal to friends you do make and who expect the same loyalty in return. Those who really get to know you realize it takes a lot to shake your trust in your friends, but equally that it takes you a long time to get over it if that trust is ever broken.

**21 to 30 POINTS:** Your friends see you as painstaking and fussy. They see you as very cautious, extremely careful, a slow and steady plodder. It would really surprise them if you ever did something impulsively or on the spur of the moment, expecting you to examine everything carefully from every angle and then, usually decide against it. They think this reaction is caused partly by your careful nature.

**UNDER 21 POINTS:** People think you are shy, nervous, and indecisive, someone who needs looking after, who always wants someone else to make the decisions & who doesn't want to get involved with anyone or anything! They see you as a worrier who always sees problems that don't exist. Some people think you are boring. Only those who know you well know that you aren't.

**Submitted by Pat Woodard – Food & Nutrition (Rocky Mount)**

## *April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month*

In 1983, President Ronald Reagan Proclaimed April as National Child Abuse Prevention Month. Blue ribbons symbolize child abuse prevention and you may notice them around the community during the month of April.

Each year in Edgecombe County, hundreds of children are suspected of being abused or neglected. Most families do not intentionally abuse or neglect their children but are in need of assistance such as: financial, educational, respite, parenting, community support, and more.

Often times, the public doesn't know what they can do to help. There are things that each and every one of us can do to help a family in need. We can:

- **volunteer to baby sit**
- **lend a listening ear to an overwhelmed parent**
- **tell them about services available at the Department of Social Services**
- **inform them of other community agencies such as the Down East Partnership for Children and family resource centers in the area**
- **become a foster parent**
- **become a mentor**
- **report suspected abuse to your local DSS (in Edgecombe County 641-7668)**

Even just saying, "hello...what a beautiful day!" can change someone's whole outlook on the day and give them a positive attitude that will help when they are dealing with the difficulties of life.

On April 12<sup>th</sup>, the Edgecombe County Community Child Protection team will highlight Child Abuse Prevention by holding an event during the baseball game between Tarboro High and South West Edgecombe High Schools. Please come out and support children in Edgecombe County!

For more information, contact Michele Cherry, Families for Kids 2 Coordinator at 985-0078 or [michele.cherry@co.edgecombe.nc.us](mailto:michele.cherry@co.edgecombe.nc.us).







## ***DSS' History Book***



**The Tarboro DSS main building, a.k.a. The White House, was erected in 1937 as a County Nursing Home. The facility accommodated 52 residents. In the early seventies the facility became The Edgecombe County Department of Social Services under Director Claudia Edwards. Today, approximately 44 persons are employed at this location.**



**The DSS Annex Building in Tarboro was built in 1972 and operated as the Edgecombe County Mental Health Building. In 2006, Children Protective Services Unit which was operating out of two trailers located on the same campus as the White House, relocated to this building. Today, approximately 38 persons are employed at this location.**



**The Rocky Mount DSS building was built in 1990. Prior to the erection of this site, staff was located and took applications at various outpost locations such as the OIC Building on Virginia Avenue in Rocky Mount. Today, approximately 54 persons are employed at this location.**



**The Tarboro DSS Work First and Child Support Units operates out of two trailers. The trailers were placed in their locations between 1991 & 1993. Today, approximately 17 persons (total) are employed in these two locations.**

# Telephone Etiquette



**It's rude and unprofessional not to return telephone calls!!**



Be kind. Everybody has had a tough day. Before you pick up the telephone, make yourself smile. It will help make your voice sound pleasant even if you don't feel pleasant. Remember, you only get one chance to make a first impression.



Be helpful. The client needs our assistance and we need the client. One of the best parts of our job is that we have many opportunities to help people. Never tell a client "I don't know." It is better to say, "let me check to see what I can find out."



Return telephone calls promptly. One of the most unprofessional things you can do is **NOT RETURNING CALLS**. How many of us have attempted to contact someone over a period of days or even weeks and you find that YOU are the only one initiating the telephone call. After returning a call you will hear your clients say "thank you for returning my call so promptly or thanks for getting back to me".

**People stop looking for "WORK" when they find a job!!**

## DSS' Photo Album



Claudia Edwards – DSS' First Director



Edith Mizelle – Medicaid Supervisor, 1977



**Standing Left to Right:** Dazzerine Pitt, Mary Maultsby, Linda Jefferson, Yvonne Hickman, Marisa Spruill, Gwen Ross, Carolyn Faison-Johnson  
**Seated:** Florence Knight, Medicaid Supervisor



**Seated:** Rita Hagans  
**Standing Left to Right:** MaryLou Flowers and Hobert Freeman, former Edgecombe County DSS Director



## Agency News



**Hope Bethea**, Social Worker, Children Protective Services Unit in Tarboro, received recognition for a great job “partnering” with one of our community resources, Edgecombe County Schools. Hope was described as a dedicated Social Worker who is able to negotiate and advocate for her clients, children and families towards a positive outcome. Hope’s work, attitude and accomplishments were commended by a respected member of the school staff. Our **HATS** off to you Hope!!!

**Yvonne Hickman**, Medicaid Supervisor in Tarboro, will be honored with a retirement party on March 26, 2008, in Tarboro. Yvonne is retiring with 30 years of dedicated service. She started her career as a Clerk in the Medicaid unit and held several positions. We’re GONNA MISS YA! We wish her all the best in her future endeavors. *Come see about us Yvonne!*

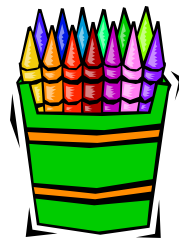
**Rita Hagans**, Child Support Supervisor in Rocky Mount, is skipping down the yellow brick road to retirement. She will be honored with a retirement party on March 27, 2008, in Rocky Mount. Rita has 30 years of commendable service. She started her career as an Income Maintenance Caseworker I in the AFDC/WFFA unit. Congratulations Rita! We feel your happiness. *Are those TEARS of JOY?*

**Brenda Dickens**, Child Support Agent in Rocky Mount, is please to announce that her son Marcus Solomon, went to Great Lake, Illinois, on March 3, 2008, for Basic Training for the US Navy. *Serve your country well, Marcus!*

The Food and Nutrition Unit is pleased to announce the return of **Linda Jackson** from medical leave. Linda has recovered and is now **BRAND NEW**.

## Just for Laughs

Tom had this problem of getting up late in the morning and was always late for work. His supervisor was upset at him and threatened to fire him if he didn't do something about it. So Tom went to his doctor who gave him a pill and told him to take it before he went to bed. Tom slept extremely well and in fact beat the alarm in the morning. He had a leisurely breakfast and drove cheerfully to work. "Boss", he said, "The pill actually worked!" "That's all fine" said the boss, "But where were you yesterday?"



We can learn a lot from crayons. Some are pretty and some are dull. Some have weird names, and all are different **colors**, but they **all** have to live in the same box.